



Fundación En Vía Volunteer Housing Guide

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	3
GENERAL ADVICE.....	4
WHERE TO LOOK ONLINE.....	6
WHERE TO LOOK IN OAXACA.....	7
SUGGESTED HOUSING OPTIONS.....	8

INTRODUCTION

While Oaxaca has a variety of housing options for all budgets and lifestyles, finding those options can sometimes be difficult given the “word-of-mouth” culture surrounding apartment hunting. The reality is that many private landlords with apartments or rooms for rent do little or nothing to advertise – sometimes you just have to knock on doors and look for rental signs on doors or windows. In order to make finding housing easier for our hardworking volunteers, Fundación En Vía has prepared this guide to the Oaxaca housing market. It includes general advice for prospective renters, places to look for housing online, places to look for housing in Oaxaca, and suggested housing options with which past volunteers have had good experiences.

General Advice

Average Rent: While prices vary according to neighborhood and season (for example, prices are highest from January to March when Canadians and Americans are escaping winter at home), you should expect to be able to find a clean, private room – in a safe and charming neighborhood – with 24/7 hot water, Wi-Fi, and shared kitchen/bathroom facilities for around \$200/month USD. Expect to pay a bit more if you would prefer your own apartment or close proximity to the Zócalo. Discounts are often offered for renters who will commit to more than one month. You should feel comfortable negotiating any initial rent offer.

Damage Deposit: Before paying a damage deposit, be careful to be clear with your landlord about the terms of the deposit. Make sure to alert your landlord to any pre-existing damage. What are the rules for having your deposit returned in full? How and when will it be returned at the end of your stay? You should request that your deposit be returned in cash to avoid being told that it “must” be returned via direct deposit to a bank account or via check.

Gas/Hot Water: Most likely, your hot water and stove will be powered by a gas tank that your landlord has to replace every month or so from a truck selling gas. If your landlord has the responsibility of paying for and replacing your gas tank when empty, it is a good idea to question how/when this will happen. Also, note that some landlords will require you to turn on/off your gas-powered hot water heater before and after showering in order to save gas.

Water: Especially during the dry months, most houses and apartment buildings depend on private underground cisterns to supply water for bathing. This means your landlord will need to keep this cistern full of water and, when water pressure drops in your house, either turn on the pump (la bomba) or show you how to access the switch (typically electrical panel). This is another thing to ask about before putting down any money.

Wi-Fi: Wi-Fi (Internet alámbrico) is offered in most houses and apartments, but is it really “offered” in your private bedroom? Some landlords will say they have Internet, but it will only work if you bring your laptop outside or sit in the garden. If reliable Internet is very important to you, you will most likely want to “test” your laptop or phone in your bedroom.

Special Note for Those Studying Spanish at ICO

The Instituto Cultural Oaxaca can arrange housing for anyone taking Spanish classes at the school. This can be very convenient – although slightly more expensive than finding comparable housing on your own – as they will take care of all of the details for you before you arrive. Many volunteers have arranged housing through them, and then either stayed in it for their whole stay, or stayed there for their first week or so while they searched for other housing.

Housing can be arranged in a homestay, posada, or apartment, and details are available at <http://icomexico.com/spanish/accomodation1.php>.

Where to Look Online

Facebook: Groups “Renta de cuartos y depas en Oaxaca” or “Clandestine Oaxaca”

Craigslist (<http://oaxaca.en.craigslist.com.mx/>): Check the “apts/housing” and “rooms/shared” links for potential living situations. Please note that the apartments posted on Craigslist are often more expensive than those which you can find offline of a similar quality and size.

Oaxaca Times Classifieds (<http://www.oaxacatimes.com/edit-classifieds/117-housing-classifieds-new>): Apartments, houses and shared rooms. Please note that this site is only updated every couple of weeks.

CompartoDepa (<http://www.compartodepa.com.mx/>): Online room and apartment rental database. Free, but requires registration.

Vivanuncios <http://www.vivanuncios.com.mx/> Online listings - select “Oaxaca” and search!

Where to Look in Oaxaca

Walking around! Check out posters, flyers and notices in/outside popular spots and cultural spaces as well as in windows and doorways.

Recommended “zonas”: centro histórico, Panorámica del Fortín/Crespo, Xochimilco, Reforma, Jalatlaco.

Cafés (also happen to be great places to hang out):

La Jicara (Porfirio Díaz 1105), El Lobo Azul (Armenta y López 120), Café Nuevo Mundo (M. Bravo 206)

Oaxaca Lending Library (Pino Suárez 519 – near the Parque Llano): Consult the library’s housing binder (ask the check-in counter clerk for its location) and/or its bulletin boards.

Language Schools: Any Spanish-language school listed in your travel guidebook will typically have a large bulletin board in their entry/lobby with advertisements for rooms, shared houses and apartments.

Suggested Housing Options

Note that most hostels in Oaxaca offering private rooms will be happy to negotiate a monthly rate. If you particularly like where you are staying and enjoy the social atmosphere of a hostel, this could be a good living option if privacy is not a top concern.

Casa Angel Hostel (Tinoco y Palacios 610, <http://www.casaangelhostel.com/>): Those seeking a place to hang their hat while looking for longer-term housing – or interested in a friendly and social living atmosphere if only volunteering for a shorter duration – might find this hostel – popular with a host of former volunteers – to be a good place to start their time in Oaxaca. It offers free hot breakfast, strong showers, spotlessly clean facilities, and is just a short walk away from the Instituto Cultural Oaxaca.

Apartment (Landlady: Laura) (Crespo 603, Corner of Crespo and Quetzalcoatl, laura_rojas_hernandez@hotmail.com): One- and two-bedroom apartments that are well adorned, and a very good price for the quality of finishings and convenient location. All units have internet, hot water, are fully furnished, and are centered around a shared patio. Only a 15-minute walk to the ICO, 10-minute walk to Santo Domingo (big church that marks the center of the historic center), and 2 blocks from Sanchez Pascuas, a fabulous fresh market.

Rooms and Apartment (Landlady: Yolanda) (Libres 807, Phone: 51-30-192): Two bedroom/two bath apartment with cleaning service, as well as individual rooms with private bathrooms and common space on the second floor. Option to purchase breakfast.

Bedroom in Lachigolo (Calle Agua Azul, Paraje El Pocito, Lachigolo, Teresa Ponikvar and Ibis Alonso, tere_ponikvar@hotmail.com): By bus, 20 minutes from Oaxaca City and 10 minutes from Teotitlán. Bedroom in a private home with shared bathroom, kitchen and common areas. Mexican/American couple and their toddler. No hot water or Internet, but beautiful views, peace and quiet, and a taste of rural Mexican life. All the fresh eggs you can eat.

Rooms in Private Home (Landlady: Soledad) (Margarita Maza 424, Phone: 515-3326): Private bedrooms. Excellent breakfast included. Reliable hot water and Wi-Fi. Just around the corner from the ICO.

Rooms and Apartments in Guest House (itit.saulochavez@gmail.com, 951-513-4546, 951-105-5244): Variety of rooms, studios and apartments with private and shared bath opposite peaceful park where Friday and Saturday Organic Market is located. Xochimilco neighborhood across Ninos Heroes from the historic center. Lots of young, foreign volunteers and workers. Large rooftop terrace.

****IMPORTANT NOTICE – This document is to serve as an informative guide only. En Vía does not hold any responsibility to help you in any housing situations that may arise from safety issues to disagreements. It is recommend that you first come to Oaxaca before securing housing, so you can make an educated decision on a place to live, to accurately assess the living conditions, landlord, and location of the rental.**